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OFFBEAT DIARY

Vacationing Spy, Family Can Find Fun in the Orient

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HONG KONG—A report from Washington says that the Central Intelligence Agency has asked Congress to pay travel expenses to and from a vacation spot for its agents and their families.

CIA Chief W. F. Raborn reportedly told Congress that the privileges would apply only to those agents serving in hardship posts.

Raborn said agents would be allowed to go to areas where they could "relax and obtain needed freedom from climatic and other conditions which caused his post of assignment to be designated as a hardship post."

Spy "group tours" could suddenly blossom with special rates and such extras as bulletproof sight-seeing buses. Hotels would probably set aside special spy suites. These would have soundproof walls, untappable telephones, high frequency radios and bilingual room boys. Signs in the room would say: "Management assumes no responsibility for guns, knives, poison darts not placed in hotel safe."

The hotel management could be expected to provide baby-sitters for the agents' children while the parents were attending special briefings.

All baby-sitters would have security clearance before being employed.

Wives of spies would have their hair done in a special booth in the hotel beauty salon where the hair dryer had been prechecked for bugging devices.

What's a hardship post? Spies in Singapore are often heard to complain about the heat around the swimming pool at the Goodwood hotel. These spies would probably want to holiday in Tokyo.

Hong Kong spies are frequently overheard grumbling about the lack of sight-seeing spots, compared to Hong Kong.

Bangkok-based spies, on the other hand, complain that the wine lists in that city are not as complete as those in Hong Kong.

To compensate for these hardships, Hong Kong spies would probably want to visit Bangkok on vacation and agents resident in Bangkok would choose Hong Kong to "get away from it all."

The next logical step after "spy tourism" will probably be a retirement home for spies.

It might be called "Spy City" or "Ranch Espionage."

Its location could be voted on by a ballot sent to all working spies. Likely spots are some fog-shrouded island off the coast of Beirut. Or possibly Macao, the Portuguese colony near Hong Kong.